



05 JUN, 2023

## 100 YEARPLAN Where nature and agriculture co-exist

Country Leader Tamworth - insert, Tamworth

Page 1 of 2

# 100 YEAR PLAN

### FIELD DAY

JUST outside of Clunes in Northern NSW, nestled in what was once Big Scrub Rainforest, lies Banyula, a 914-acre mixed enterprise focused on regenerative agriculture and reforestation.

The team at Banyula grow a number of native bush foods, and farm cattle using rotational grazing techniques.

They also aim to restore as much as of the Big Scrub as they can, to improve wildlife habitat and the ecosystem.

Co-owner of the property Richard Schweger said: "It's about setting up a system where the rainforest regeneration positively impacts the crops, cross pollinating, feeding the soil, creating its own microclimate and delivering newfound life to both the landscape and produce.

"We've also planted 25

hectares of eucalypt species for koalas; this helps to restore land that is otherwise difficult to farm, and will form what will eventually become a 'koala resort'."

The Banyula team has cleared large swathes of camphor laurel, planted close to 300,000 trees, fenced off 7km of river frontage and replanted it with rainforest species, and sown cover crops in the interrows to help nurture the soil and improve biodiversity.

They are also implementing holistic cattle management and rotational grazing.

This ensures that the land is granted respite, fostering its long-term vitality and prosperity.

"The repair to our system is huge," Banyula Director Matt Bleakley said.

"Just the other day we had an ecologist on the property

who's spotted all sorts of growth including the return of one of the native grasses in the top paddock."

The farm's carbon sequestration efforts also come in the form of a large-scale integrated model, facilitated by Climate Friendly, earning well-deserved carbon credits.

"This is a 100 plus year plan," Mr Bleakley said.

■ Continued P2



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Some of the Banyula team, Richard Schweger, Dr. Nicole Bollschweiler, Matt and Shae Bleakley. Picture supplied

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■ From P1

"We envision Banyula as a sustainable journey with nature and would like to extend an open invitation for people to come on this regeneration journey with us, to partake in the vision of a future where nature's resurgence is celebrated and can co-exist with agriculture," Mr Schweger said.

Banyula will be hosting a field day on June 16 which will look at the big and microscopic issues involved in farming for climate resilience and productivity.

The event is an initiative of Northern Rivers Net Zero, in collaboration with Southern Cross University, Banyula,

and the Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia (PIEFA).

Co-hosted by filmmaker Damon Gameau and regenerative agriculture pioneer Lorraine Gordon, the field day will also feature soil scientist at the Department of Primary Industries Dr Lukas Van Zwieten, and CEO of The

Casino Food Co-op Simon Stahl. This will be followed by a panel discussion with a Q A and lunch prepared by celebrity chef Mindy Woods and David Carew. Mindy uses seasonal and indigenous ingredients.

Nathan Kempshall, the project manager of NR Net Zero, said: "It's fantastic to

see a project that ticks so many boxes such as carbon sequestration, emission mitigation, biodiversity, and koala protection."

To book a ticket for the Banyula field day, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/601086976327> or <https://www.facebook.com/BanyulaJourney>.



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**Nathan Kempshall**